

Message

From: Jones, Erica [Jones.Erica@epa.gov]
Sent: 6/15/2022 2:24:59 PM
To: Hesterlee, Craig [Hesterlee.Craig@epa.gov]; Thomas, Chris [Thomas.Chris@epa.gov]
CC: Gettle, Jeaneanne [Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov]; Diaz, Denisse [Diaz.Denisse@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: MEDIA INQUIRY: The Islander Newspaper

Great, thank you. Now that I see what was sent out I will respond to James with that exact language- I think it is appropriate and responds to the reporters questions. If you have any concerns please let me know.

"On June 8, 2022, EPA Region 4 made a final decision to issue the NPDES permit for Ocean Era's marine aquaculture facility (Velella Epsilon) in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The final permit, fact sheet, appeal procedures, and other supporting documents are available on EPA's website – <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/ocean-era-inc-velella-epsilon-aquatic-animal-production-facility-national-pollutant> . Please send any questions to R4NPDES.Kampachi@epa.gov. "

From: Hesterlee, Craig <Hesterlee.Craig@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 10:15 AM
To: Jones, Erica <Jones.Erica@epa.gov>; Thomas, Chris <Thomas.Chris@epa.gov>
Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne <Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov>; Diaz, Denisse <Diaz.Denisse@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: MEDIA INQUIRY: The Islander Newspaper

Erica- here is the email that was sent to over 16,000 addresses with notification of issuance of the final permit. The link – <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/ocean-era-inc-velella-epsilon-aquatic-animal-production-facility-national-pollutant> is the appropriate website containing all of the documents in the permit package (we post this on Region 4's website, not the HQ website (HQ does not really maintain the HQ website and I am not really clear why it exists).

Craig Hesterlee, Chief
NPDES Permitting Section
EPA Region 4 Water Division
404.562.9749

From: R4NPDES.Kampachi
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2022 4:19 PM
To: R4NPDES Kampachi Comments <R4NPDES_Kampachi_Comments@epa.gov>
Subject: Issuance of Final NPDES permit for Ocean Era Velella Epsilon (FLOA00001)

To Whom it May Concern,

On June 8, 2022, EPA Region 4 made a final decision to issue the NPDES permit for Ocean Era's marine aquaculture facility (Velella Epsilon) in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The final permit, fact sheet, appeal procedures, and other supporting documents are available on EPA's website – <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/ocean-era-inc-velella-epsilon-aquatic-animal-production-facility-national-pollutant>

Please send any questions to R4NPDES.Kampachi@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

EPA Region 4, Water Division
Permitting and Grants Branch
NPDES Permitting Section

From: Jones, Erica <Jones.Erica@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 9:49 AM
To: Thomas, Chris <Thomas.Chris@epa.gov>; Hesterlee, Craig <Hesterlee.Craig@epa.gov>
Cc: Gettle, Jeaneanne <Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov>; Diaz, Denisse <Diaz.Denisse@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: MEDIA INQUIRY: The Islander Newspaper

Hi Chris and Craig, please see below. I think we can use a very simple statement that answers the questions posed.

Is the administrative record available online? I found the link below and wasn't sure if it is in the process of being updated. Right now there are no records available on that site.

<https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/region-4-gulf-mexico-offshore-aquaculture-npdes-permits>

This is a draft response:

"A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit was issued to Ocean Era, Inc. for the Velella Epsilon facility on June 8, 2022 by the Environmental Protection Agency Region 4. The administrative record for the permit can be found at (website if available)."

From: Pinkney, James <Pinkney.James@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2022 7:10 PM
To: Jones, Erica <Jones.Erica@epa.gov>
Cc: Jenkins, Brandi <Jenkins.Brandi@epa.gov>; Wise, Allison <Wise.Allison@epa.gov>; Gettle, Jeaneanne <Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov>; Wilborn, Janay <Wilborn.Janay@epa.gov>
Subject: MEDIA INQUIRY: The Islander Newspaper

Erica,

The following inquiry was received today. Can you route it in your division for a response?

The Islander Newspaper (FL) (Lisa Neff) [Received 6/14] -OPEN – The reporter said that she has seen some news reports the past two days regarding the Ocean Era permit for the aquaculture project (**Velella Epsilon**) in the Gulf of Mexico off the Sarasota County, Florida, coastline. She would like to know: Was the permit issued? What date was the permit issued? Can we direct her to a location where she can read the EPA decision on the permit?

Thanks,

James Pinkney
Public Affairs Specialist
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Office of External Affairs
Phone: (404) 562-9183
Email: pinkney.james@epa.gov
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